



# Operation Desert Strike



Special Deployment Issue, Volume 5

## FIRST STRIKE REPORT

### Ammunition Soldiers Keep First Strike Launchers Firing

#### “Truth Behind the Glory”

Untold numbers of the young men of America join the Field Artillery each year because of footage of the Paladin and MLRS platforms that speaks to the fundamental nature of man. It has a sense of power and glory that is unmatched. But what is the truth behind the glory?

Over the past six months, it has become apparent that the ammunition platoons of the Steel Rain and Thunder batteries drive much of the success or failure of the battalion as a whole. As the individual crews

grow more and more proficient, greater and greater amounts of ammunition pods were available to fuel the commander's intent. In the words of SSG Vidal “Sassoon” to a SPLL Chief, “If we don't look good, you don't look good.”

Six months ago, Ammo didn't look good. But through hard work, dedication, and perseverance, they have become the epitome of the “Never-Say-Die” spirit. Each stood tall, hearing their Battalion Commander's three simple words “Improve Every Day.” They raised these words as a banner before them. “Improve every day,” the mantra on every lip. Upload times dropped even faster than enemies on the receiving end of Steel Rain and Thunder's fury. 1 hour, 22 minutes, 55 minutes, 43, 39 . . . the trend continued. The slowest crew, if slow can really be used in conjunction with such a standard, could complete the task



in 32 minutes.

From these thirty ordinary people come extraordinary actions. PV2 Cook and PFC Varnell set the standard with 21:30 upload in MOPP2, while the “Can do, I am the standard” attitude of CPL Smart and SPC Daugherty led the battalion ammunition team's motivation to all time highs. SGT Barker, SSG Tobin, SSG Vidal, and SSG Howtl . . . Hought . . . Hu . . . SSG HT melded their sections together until culminating performance when the assistant section chief, SGT “Silver Fox”

Rutherford led the entire Rocket 1<sup>st</sup> section to finish upload in a mere 23 minutes.

The word is out—these men are true warriors. For the first time, soldiers ask to be in Ammo. Perhaps there is no better illustration of this than Thunder's Commander, CPT Karr. Not once, but twice he has left his own vehicle to drive a HEMTT, wishing he too could wear the noblest of titles “Ammo Dawg.”

--Deep Strike 5

#### Pegasus 6 Arrives:

•MG McKiernan arrived in theater Tuesday afternoon to observe First Strike in action. Operation Desert Strike marks the first deployment of its kind for an MLRS battalion and will set the standard for future First Team MLRS Battalions.

## First Strike Quotable Quotes

See if you can match these infamous First Strike Quotes with their respective sources.

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. "Commanders and 1SG's will have to Troop Lead that issue. Checkold?" | A. CPT Waldrup  |
| 2. "We all need to dig in to Pegasus Point."                            | B. CW2 Williams |
| 3. "What's the MTP say? I should know—I wrote it."                      | C. 1LT Krause   |
| 4. "Let's take a warm shower and I'll explain it to you."               | D. MAJ Lee      |
| 5. "That's a pretty big latrine for four men."                          | E. LTC Reid     |
| 6. "Sir, that's ridiculous."  | F. SGT Frazier  |
| 7. "I'll make a believer out of you."                                   | G. 1SG Jay      |
| 8. "Soldiers only need four hours of sleep per night."                  | H. CPT Ferguson |
| 9. "Uh, Sir? There's no such thing as 'MOPP Carry.'"                    | I. CSM Phipps   |
| 10. "Another Frago? No Problem."  | J. MAJ Hisle    |

Where appropriate, quotes have been edited for humoristic value. –Editorial Staff

CPT Samuel Saine, last year's winner of the Army's prestigious "Who-can-carry-the-most-crap-on-his-LBE?" Award, has made limited quantities of his groundbreaking (and chair-breaking) gear available exclusively through this *First Strike Retort* offer. Choose from among these three tough-guy models:

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### Coming in the Next Issue:

Check out these exciting articles in the upcoming issue of the *Retort*.

Radio Traffic—Can Anyone Stop Striker 4, Striker 2W?

"Life at Dona Ana"—True Confessions of CW2 Dunaway and Mr. Millikin

"Caffeine, Nicotine, and Blank Stares"—Soldiers on the Night Shift

"Limericks, Witticisms, and Dirty Pictures"—An Introduction to Port-A-Potty Art

**Plus:**  
**Twelve Gourmet MRE Recipes**

### RT6, RT9 and COL (Ret.) "Doc" McNaney in Theater

With Operation Desert Strike in full swing, the Red Team Command Group hit the ground late Wednesday evening to observe 1-21 on the battlefield and provide guidance for the remainder of the exercise. "This is the most focused training I've seen in the DIVARTY this year," said COL Hammond. "It's clear that this is a well-organized and disciplined fighting unit."

MG McKiernan and BG Simmons are due to arrive at Fort Bliss next Wednesday, and look forward to seeing the First Strike Battalion in action. "We have continued to improve with each day of training, and as the OPTEMPO increases, our soldiers will demonstrate the mettle that makes them First Strike soldiers," said LTC Reid. "We will return to Fort Hood victorious and among the best trained MLRS Battalions in the Army."